#### **OFFICE OF TRAFFIC SAFETY**

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# PRESS RELEASE

#### FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

July 29, 2013

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### National Heatstroke Prevention Day is July 31

**Sacramento, CA** –In recognition of National Heatstroke Prevention Day on July 31, The California Office of Traffic Safety (OTS) is reminding Californians to take precautions when out in summer temperatures and to guard against the danger of leaving children unattended in vehicles.

"Too many children die as a result of being left unattended in vehicles for any amount of time," said OTS Director Christopher J. Murphy. "These tragedies are 100 percent preventable. National Heatstroke Prevention Day is a good reminder for parents and caregivers to ensure that no child is ever left unsupervised."

Before the heat wave in early July 2013, OTS warned that a car's internal temperature can rise above 100 degrees even on cooler days, while a car in 110 degree sun can reach 160 degrees in an hour. When the temperature is 100 degrees, even a half-hour in a vehicle can be enough heat to kill or severely injure young children. Senate Bill 255, also known as Kaitlyn's Law, was enacted in California in 2001 and made it illegal to leave children unattended in a motor vehicle.

OTS is again sharing the following tips and reminders to help parents and guardians follow the law and keep their children safe this summer:

- Never leave your child unattended in a hot vehicle, not even for a minute
- For parents of young children, place a needed item for your next stop, such as your cell phone or purse, on the floor in front of your child's safety seat. This will help to remind you that your child is in the car when you retrieve the needed items
- Set a reminder or alarm on your cell phone that reminds you to drop off your child at school or day care, or have a loved one call to ensure that the drop-off occurred
- Ask day care providers to call if your child is ever late being dropped off
- Develop a routine for exiting the car; check the backseat and lock all doors and the trunk every time
- Always lock your car doors and do not give children access to keys or keyless entry devices
- Teach your children that cars are never to be used as a place to play
- If your child is missing, be sure to check all vehicles and trunks
- If you see an unattended child in a hot vehicle, call 911 immediately

By following these simple tips and reminders, you can help protect your most important cargo. For more safety tips and information, please visit the OTS on Facebook at <a href="www.facebook.com/CaliforniaOTS">www.facebook.com/CaliforniaOTS</a> or follow OTS on Twitter @OTS\_CA. For more information on all OTS efforts, visit <a href="www.ots.ca.gov">www.ots.ca.gov</a>